

Week Ending Friday, March 19, 1993

**Remarks to the Crew of the U.S.S.
*Theodore Roosevelt***

March 12, 1993

Thank you very much, Captain. I know that I won't be able to see all of you now, but I've seen as many as I could, and I've shaken hands with a lot of you. I've also reviewed your mission and been very impressed with it.

I want to recognize the presence on the ship of the 1992 Sailor of the Year, Donald Leroy Heffentrager; as well as the First Class Petty Officer of the Quarter, Gary Neff; the Senior Petty Officer of the Quarter, Gregory Ham; the Junior Petty Officer of the Quarter, Jason McCord; and the Blue Jacket of the Quarter, Airman Todd Pearson.

I've been very impressed with everything I've seen and with all the people I've met. As Commander in Chief it's immensely reassuring to me to know that the United States is served by people of such high quality and such great dedication. The Secretary of Defense, Les Aspin, and the others who are here in my company have already learned a great deal and see a lot that we admire and that we like. I thank you for your service to the country, and I look forward to the remainder of my stay here. And I wish you well on your deployment.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:40 p.m. in the Carrier Intelligence Center aboard the U.S.S. *Theodore Roosevelt*. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Remarks to the Crew of the U.S.S.
*Theodore Roosevelt***

March 12, 1993

Thank you very much, Secretary Aspin, Admiral Miller, Admiral Johnson, Captain Bryant, Captain Moore, Colonel Schmidt,

General Keys, and to all of you here on the crew of the *Theodore Roosevelt*. I think I can speak for the people who came in my party, including the distinguished Members of the United States Congress who are here. This has been a wonderful day for us, and we thank you.

I am honored to be here. As many of you know, it is a great blessing and a great honor to be elected President of the United States. But there is no greater honor in the office than being the Commander in Chief of the finest Armed Forces in the world today and the finest America has ever known.

Our Armed Forces are more than the backbone of our security. You are the shining model of our American values: dedication, responsibility, a willingness to sacrifice for the common good and for the interests and the very existence of this country. Our Armed Forces today stand as one of modern history's great success stories. Look at this crew, reflecting every color, every background, every region of our society. I might say it's been a special pleasure to me to meet at least six people from my home State of Arkansas here today. I'm sure there are more of you here that I haven't met.

The American military pioneered our Nation's progress toward integration and equal opportunity. It is America's most effective education and training system. It's constantly asked to adapt to change and always, always, you have risen to the challenge. All who wear America's uniforms are what makes the United States of America a true superpower and a genuine force for peace and democracy in the world.

Yes, this carrier can extend our reach. These planes can deliver our might. They are truly extraordinary tools, but only because they are in the hands of you. It is your skill, your professionalism, your courage, and your dedication to our country and to service that gives the muscle, sinew, and the soul of our

strength. And today, I'm proud to be here to salute you. I want to say a word about the Navy and to tell you what it means to me to have a ready fleet.

When word of crisis breaks out in Washington, it's no accident that the first question that comes to everyone's lips is, where is the nearest carrier? This ship's namesake, President Theodore Roosevelt, once said, "The Navy of the United States is the right arm of the United States and is emphatically the peacemaker." Theodore Roosevelt took special pride in our Navy, and I do, too. All of you ought to know that he was the first American ever to win the Nobel Prize. He won the Nobel Peace Prize for his role in settling a war between Russia and Japan in the first decade of this century, in part due to the contributions of the United States Navy.

This impressive ship, not yet 10 years old, already has an impressive history, serving with distinction during the Gulf war, where many of you served as well. And today we should recall that three of this ship's crew gave the last full measure of their devotion toward that victory.

But the *Theodore Roosevelt* was part of history even earlier. In 1988, it was here that an American Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff first welcomed his Soviet counterpart to visit an American aircraft carrier. When my friend Admiral William Crowe and Marshal Sergey Akhromeyev stepped aboard this ship together to meet the crew and watch flight operations, as I have done here today, it was a key milestone on the road to the end of the cold war.

Now, less than 5 years later, the world has changed faster than anyone on board then could have possibly imagined. The cold war is over. The Soviet Union itself no longer exists. The Warsaw Pact is gone. The specter of Soviet tanks rolling westward across the north German plain no longer haunts the United States.

Yet this world remains a very dangerous place. Saddam Hussein confirmed that. The tragic violence in Bosnia today reminds us of that every day. The proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction is a growing menace, unfortunately, not a receding one, to peaceful nations. And human suffering such as that now being endured by

the people of Somalia may not threaten our shores, but still they require us to act.

Such challenges are new in many ways, but we dare not overlook the significance that they pose to our new world. Blinders never provide security. A changed security environment demands not less security but a change in our security arrangements.

What is happening on this ship proves that it can be done. On this deployment you are, as the Secretary of Defense noted, doing something new. You've changed your crew and your equipment to reflect the new challenges of the post-cold-war era. A squadron of sub-hunting planes is gone, giving room to carry a contingent of tough and versatile Marines, enabling you to address new potential challenges such as evacuations or taking control of troubled ports.

You have the services working together in new ways. That enables you to operate perhaps with fewer ships and personnel but with greater efficiency and effectiveness. This isn't downsizing for its own sake. It's rightsizing for security's sake.

The changes on board the *Theodore Roosevelt* preview the changes I believe we must pursue throughout our military. We must keep, however, a few core ideas in mind as we pursue those changes. Our military must be exceptionally mobile, with first-rate sea-lift, airlift, and the ability to project power. And there is no more awesome example of that than the fearsome striking power that can be launched from the deck of this mighty ship.

Our military must also be agile, with an emphasis on maneuver, on speed, on technological superiority. That's exactly what the special purpose Marine air ground task force you have on board is all about. Our fire power must be precise, so that we can minimize the exposure to harm for the men and women who wear our uniforms and reduce civilian casualties where we must act.

Our military increasingly needs to be flexible so that we can cooperate with diverse coalition partners in very different parts of the world. And we must be smart, with the intelligence and communications we need for the complex threats we face. And I might say I was deeply impressed with a wide array of communications equipment that many of

you showed me today. Above all else, we must always be ready, given the unpredictability of new threats.

None of these goals are possible unless we have a quality force. You, the crew of this ship, exemplify that quality with your skills, your experience, your training, and your dedication, many of you at astonishingly young ages. You have shown me that you know how to get the job done. I know our Nation can now have confidence that America's vital interests are well protected.

While all of you from the grapes on the roof to the aviators in the ready rooms, to the snipes in the holes, while you carry out your missions so far from home over the next few months, we back at home will be engaged in a raging debate about defense policy. As you watch the news on CNN or read the newspapers that are delivered here to your ship, you will hear us talk of roles and missions. You will see news about bases and budgets. But as we reduce defense spending, we will not leave the men and the women who helped to win the cold war out in the cold. As bases close, and they must, we must not close our eyes and hearts to the need for new investments to create opportunities in the communities with the old bases.

Defense spending has been declining ever since 1986. But I believe we have not had a strong enough plan for what to do with the new defense we are building and with those who contributed to the old defense; an insufficient plan for military personnel who muster out; an insufficient plan for civilian workers who made the wonderful weapons that helped us to dominate the world who now have lost their jobs; an insufficient plan for the communities that have been devastated or for the companies that have been hurt.

We cannot repeal the laws of change. After all, you and those who preceded you in uniform worked so hard, fought so hard, and many died so that the cold war could be won and we could rely less on defense and focus more of our resources on building our economy here at home. But still, we must act boldly to deal with the consequences of the changes we face. That's why it's so important to make the investments we need in defense conversion and the education and training in

new jobs and new industries but also to continue to make the investments we need in the defense that must be there for the United States and for the world tomorrow.

As you follow the news of these events during your voyage, while our voyage back home into this great debate is taking place, I ask you to remember this: As your Commander in Chief, I am immensely proud of who you are, what you stand for, and what you are doing. As these changes proceed, I pledge to you that as long as I am President, you and the other men and women in uniform of this country will continue to be the best trained, the best prepared, the best equipped, and the strongest supported fighting force in the world. There is no single decision I take more seriously than decisions involving the use of force. As I weigh crises that confront America around the world, you will be in my mind and in my heart.

This is a hopeful time, yet one still full of challenges. It is uncertain, and therefore, we are glad that missions such as this, while not darkly framed by the cold war confrontation with a nuclear adversary, are still smartly focused on the challenges we might face in the days ahead. Many new duties and dangers are taking place. And there is no clear direction for what things we all might have to face in the future. There is no sonar that can enable us to fathom all the changes in the terrain over which we are now setting sail.

Napoleon had a standing order to his corps commanders to, quote, "March to the sound of the guns." He meant that when the shooting starts on a battlefield, it is the soldier's obligation to move into the fight. Well, today, there are different security challenges into which we must march. And at times you who serve our Nation in uniform may be called upon to answer not only the sound of guns but also a call of distress, a summons to keep the peace, even a cry of starving children. The calls will be more diverse, but our values remain unchanged. Our purposes remain clear. And your commitment to serve remains the linchpin in every new and continuing effort.

I know this has been a difficult day for many of you. It can't be easy to leave family and friends for 6 months at sea, especially

when the challenges before us seem unclear, and when you wonder whether world events may or may not place you in harm's way. But I hope you understand that your work is vitally important to the United States and to the Commander in Chief.

This is a new and hopeful world but one full of danger. I am convinced that your country, through you, has a historic role in trying to make sure that there is, after all, a new world order, rooted in peace, dedicated to prosperity and opportunity.

The American people have placed their faith in you, and you have placed your life at the service of your country. The faith is well placed, and I thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:25 p.m. in the hangar bay aboard the ship. In his remarks, he referred to Adm. Paul David Miller, USN, commander in chief, U.S. Atlantic Command; Adm. Jay L. Johnson, USN, commander, Carrier Group 8; Capt. Stanley W. Bryant, USN, commanding officer, U.S.S. *Theodore Roosevelt*; Capt. C.W. Moore, USN, commander, Carrier Air Wing 8; Col. John W. Schmidt, USMC, commander, Special Purpose Marine Air/Ground Task Force, U.S.S. *Theodore Roosevelt*; and Gen. William M. Keys, USMC, commander, Marine Forces Atlantic. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Radio Address to the Armed Forces *March 12, 1993*

Good afternoon. I'm coming to you from aboard the United States Ship *Theodore Roosevelt*, which left yesterday from Norfolk, Virginia, on a 6-month mission. What I've seen on this ship today only increases my pride not only in the sailors and marines I met but also in every soldier, every sailor, every airman, every marine who serves our Nation, from Rhein-Main Air Force Base in Germany, where Americans are leaving to airdrop lifesaving supplies into Bosnia, to Somalia, where our Armed Forces have served with great distinction and made every American proud.

I'm honored to join you on Armed Forces Radio. I've had many blessings this year: the privilege of meeting Americans all across our Nation, the opportunity to hear about their lives and their dreams for our future, and

of course, the opportunity to become the President of the United States. But there is no greater honor than actually serving as America's Commander in Chief.

Your work is often dangerous, even when times are quiet. Your day at the office can be 6 months or longer. And it's not for the money, it's always for the country. Because America's Armed Forces are more than the backbone of our security, you're the shining model of our best values: dedication and responsibility and the willingness of you and your loved ones to bear a tremendous level of sacrifice. You commit your daily energies and even your lives to benefit your fellow Americans.

Our armed services stand as one of history's great successes. Every color, every background, every region of our society is represented in America's Armed Forces. The American military pioneered our Nation's progress toward integration and equal opportunity. It's America's most effective education and training system. It's constantly adapted to change and always rising to the challenge of change. You, and all who wear America's uniforms, are what make the United States a true superpower. It is your skill, your professionalism, your courage, and your dedication to country and service that constitutes the muscle, the sinew, and the soul of our strength. And today I salute you.

I want to say a special word about the Navy since I'm on board this fine ship today. It means a lot to a Commander in Chief to have a ready fleet. When word of a crisis breaks out in Washington, it's no accident that the first question is: Where is the nearest carrier? This ship's namesake, President Theodore Roosevelt, once said, "The Navy of the United States is the right arm of the United States and is emphatically the peacemaker." Theodore Roosevelt was the first American ever to win the Nobel Peace Prize, in part with the help of the United States Navy.

We have a great stake, you and I, in maintaining a strong American defense and in working hard even at the end of the cold war. The *Theodore Roosevelt* played an important part in the end of the cold war. In 1988, it was here that an American Chairman